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ABSTRACT

The major thesis of this paper is that the world of education has grown very complex, and it must be treated as such if one is to be an effective philosopher and educator in this century. A general reflection on the genesis of the field of education and the evolution of philosophy of education is offered. Two main parts of the educational complex are examined: the field of education as a general branch of research, study, and professional training; and the field of philosophy of education within it as a subject matter for teaching and scholarship. After a brief clarification of concerns, the paper offers an impressionistic sketch of developing and changing conceptions of the field of education and philosophy of education over the past 75 years. Then, an interpretation is presented of the complexity of both the field of education and philosophy of education and what this complexity may mean to the efforts of philosophers of education as they close out the last quarter of the 20th century.  
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## PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION:

### RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

(Presidential Address)

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I would like to use the excuse of three-quarters of a century gone by to talk generally and impressionistically about philosophy and education in retrospect and prospect. I will offer a kaleidoscopic reflection on the genesis of the field of education and the evolution of philosophy of education within it. Simply put, my thesis will be that in the 20th century, the world of education has grown very complex and we must treat it as such if we are to be effective philosophers and educators in the last quarter of this century.

Throughout my discussion, I will be concerned mainly with two parts of the educational complex: the field of education as a general branch of research, study and professional training, and the field of philosophy of education within it as a subject matter for teaching and scholarship. My plan of attack is quite simple and straightforward. First I will offer a brief clarification of my concerns, then turn to draw an impressionistic sketch of developing and changing conceptions of the field of education and philosophy of education over the past seventy-five years, and finally, I will offer my reading of the complexity of both the field of education and philosophy of education and what this complexity may

mean to the efforts of philosophers of education as they close out the last quarter of the 20th century.

I'm glad I'm speaking to fellow philosophers because there is much we have in common that is not the dominant currency in other fields. By our very nature and training we are reflective and critical. Moreover, we have the penchant for self reflection and self critique. One of our own number a long time ago said, "The unexamined life is not worth living," and we take that admonition to heart. Each of us, I'm sure, has seriously asked the questions: what should I teach? what should I write? what function should I serve in the educational enterprise? Part of what I will do here today will be to recall some of the dominant answers given to these questions by philosophers of education in this century. But more than that, I will try to highlight the complexity of the context in which such questions are asked to show that simple answers will not suffice. Nor will simple interpretations of complex answers do the job.

Putting aside the rhetoric of "thesis" and "argument," my simple purpose is really to invite you to reflect with me on our collective past and shared present in an attempt to refocus our critical skills on our field, on our work, and on our future. I will be satisfied if I do no more than turn you heads and minds in that direction even though I also hope to suggest areas in need of fuller thought and keener definition by philosophers of education in the last quarter of this century.

Let me begin with a sketch of what only a philosopher would dare call history. I will assume your general knowledge of American political, societal, and economic affairs since the turn of the century. These should serve as contextual backdrop and a stream of consciousness recounting

of them would include: industrialization, immigration, urbanization, war, prosperity, depression, war, international influence, economic influence, television, computers, space technology, Vietnam, Watergate, recession. This is also the century that witnessed the development of academically respectable behavioral and social sciences ... psychology, anthropology, sociology, economics and political science. Through it all, the curve plotting numbers of people in school and years of schooling completed climbed upward dramatically until one fourth of our nation is now in school.. We each have lived through a piece of that seventy-five years and as educators studied, did graduate work, and taught in a field that didn't formally exist at this time one hundred years ago.

During the last quarter of the 19th century, the education of teachers began to move from "normal schools" into universities and the first professorships in "education" were established.

By 1891 professorships in education were reported in thirty-one institutions, chairs of pedagogics combined with another subject (usually philosophy) in forty-five more, and lecture-ships in education in seven universities. [The historians Edwards and Richey report that] many of the courses introduced were poor in quality and probably no more advanced than some found in normal schools. The courses, the chairs, and the instructors filling those chairs were generally looked upon as something which evil times had foisted on the university. Faculties were inclined to keep the work in education as meager as outside pressure would permit and keep the relationship of the department to the university as distant as possible ... The reluctance on the part of the university to provide instruction and opportunities for research in education may be attributed in part to the fact that until the end of the 19th century the science of education had developed only a meager content.<sup>1</sup>

The dominant philosophy of education was Herbartian, a blend of rationalistic psychology, moral philosophy, and derived directives for educational practice. All this was to change rapidly in the three-quarters of a century that lay ahead.

At the turn of the century the field of education was ready to begin its development on the university level. It was no accident that Dewey and James were both philosophers and psychologists. The philosophy of mind was on the verge of conversion to empirical psychology via the catalyst of "scientific method." Beliefs that discovery of laws of the mind could unlock the gates to effective education and experiment "prove" the best ways to educate were easy to come by. Boldly, the Herbartians regrouped and established the National Society for the Scientific Study of Education in 1901. Although the word "Scientific" was to drop out of that title sometime later, it was precisely that enticing idea of developing a science of education which engaged some of the best minds in universities during the first part of this century. Men like Thorndike and Judd led the movements in educational testing, measurement, and experimental psychology. The developing ability to count and measure educational phenomena led to a surge of major school system surveys in the second decade of this century. Although the intent of any particular school systems in ordering surveys was self diagnostic and prescriptive, the result was a gathering of data about the schools of the United States on a scale which had never been done before. In 1918 Judd wrote ambitiously and optimistically in his Introduction to the Scientific Study of Education:

The science of education aims to collect by all available methods full information with regard to the origin, development, and present form of school practices and also full information with regard to social needs. It aims to subject present practices to rigid tests and comparisons and to analyze all procedures in the school by experimental method and by observation. It aims to secure complete and definite records of all that the school attempts and accomplishes ... And in the light of such studies the science of education is to suggest such enlargements and modifications of school practices as seem likely to provoke the evolution of the education system.<sup>2</sup>

This quotation encapsulates quite neatly the dominant view of the form and function that the field of education was seen to possess. It would gather all the data required and experimentally test for appropriate means of education and then let those who would do the daily business of educating proceed on their course with the sureness of an engineer building a bridge; informed, of course, about their final destination by the philosopher. By the late 1920's and culminating in the work of W.W. Charters, the belief that by means of a reduction of school objectives to their smallest parts one could "engineer" the perfect curriculum reached its pinnacle. This was "scientism" if not science at its base level. Little more than a decade later, in 1941 the Encyclopedia of Educational Research was published containing the distilled results of over 100,000 "scientific" studies of educational phenomena. An interesting appraisal of that effort is given by Brauner in his stylistic tracing of American Educational Theory:

Included [in the Encyclopedia] were only detailed factual studies - the more quantified, the better. Their inclusions seemed to be quite in line with the kind of research going on in the behavioral sciences generally. What was not so apparent was that such a collection of minute information, lacking a general framework for coherent interrelation and interpretation, bore a greater resemblance to the accumulation of a million fathom readings by Mississippi river boat captains than to any careful scientific investigation. Taken without reference to longitude, latitude, time, sun, stars, or fixed positions on the shore, some of the facts resembled marks on the side of the boat and others were as useful as crosses painted on the water ... piled up like fathom readings out of countless logbooks, the reported research in the Encyclopedia documented the state of education as an intellectual discipline at the close of pre World War II....<sup>3</sup>

In a very fundamental way, I do not think that this shot gun, eclectic approach to educational research has changed very much since 1941<sup>4</sup> as an examination of any recent annual program for the American Educational

Research Association will quickly attest. In fact, at an N.I.E. invitational meeting last summer of almost one hundred educational scholars concerned with research on teaching, the dominant and recurring plea was for some common conceptual or theoretical framework which would allow for cumulative and integrated research to be done.<sup>5</sup> In all fairness, however, one should recognize that there are parallel problems in other academic fields directed at the study of human behavior and interaction. Moreover, one should not discount the very real efforts on the part of educational "scientists" to regroup and set the scientific study of education on firmer footing in this last quarter century. Names like Cronbach, Gage, Flanders, Bellack, R. Thorndike, B.O. Smith, et. al. should bring to mind serious and successful recent efforts in this direction. But this effort to "scientize" the field of education is but one strand in the weave of this story.

Let me return to the turn of the century and look more closely at philosophy of education writ large and small. There were Herbartians as we have mentioned, but their numbers were few. There were also other and genuine philosophers who ranged over all of the universe to find the proper directions for man and the educational prescriptions that followed therefrom. These two types were essentially in the minority. Far more prevalent at the universities and colleges in the teaching of courses in "general pedagogy" or "general principles of education," (seemingly interchangeable titles with no guarantee that the subject matter would be the same) were more ordinary men. Brauner refers to them as purveyors of "rhetoric and opinion, at best [deliverers of] cracker barrel social philosophy, ... [at worst, journalists,] ... men not professionally trained in philosophy,"<sup>6</sup> but seemingly quite willing to engage "in speculating

about life and instruction, [and] in practice-centered talk of questionable utility."<sup>7</sup> Of course, we all know that Dewey published Democracy and Education in 1916 and that that book grew out of his lectures in philosophy of education at Chicago and Columbia. But in 1975 at least, it's beginning to look as if there is only one Dewey to a century and we can be fairly sure that such fare was not commonly to be found in courses on the philosophy of education taught by others.

In roughly the first quarter of the century, then, there were probably three general modes of coming at the teaching of the philosophy of education: 1) rare, but rigorous original philosophical thought sometimes merged with the "scientific attempt" to test in the crucible of practice the principles advocated; 2) less rare attempts to derive from the philosophical stances of Herbartianism, or realism or idealism principles and rubrics for educating; and 3) more often what Brauner devastatingly calls "mere journalistic thought and cracker barrel philosophy."

Summing up the situation, Brauner remarks that "by 1930 the issue had become whether education as a research discipline and as talk for professional training would emulate either the tortoise, by attempting the careful observation and description of the existing conditions, or the hare, by building speculative utopias of how things should be. It was so difficult to be literal and extensive in inquiry that the temptation to be literary and comprehensive held great appeal."<sup>8</sup> The way of philosophizing about education seemed to be set.

The oft told tale of the progressive education movement need not be repeated here, but we should note that it roughly spanned the first half of this century and was the dominant mode of attack on the formalism and rigidity of 19th century schooling. As a general movement in American

education, its demise is probably best explained by the dominance in its ranks of hares over tortoises and "band wagoneers" over concert masters. Nonetheless, part of what it meant to be a philosopher of education in this period was taken up with the task of defending or attacking the "progressive doctrine." It was a rather illusive philosophical battlefield for as Boyd Bode remarked in 1938, "the fact that the progressive movement has never come across with an adequate philosophy of education warrants the presumption that it does not have any."<sup>9</sup> Suffice it to say here that indeed the battles were real between pragmatists, idealistists, realists, perennialists, essentialists, traditionalists and any other "ist" we might add to the list. Teaching, writing, and functioning as an educator took complete dedication of one's being to a view of man and the universe which was True.

I would contend, however, that the real change in our field, philosophy of education, came not with progressive education, but with the advent of the invention of the foundations courses in the 1930's and the move by some philosophers of education into the realm of "social reconstruction." Many factors converged to bring the foundations approach about: The conception as well as the clientele of the American high school had changed radically. Not only were more students in attendance, but a newer view of high school as a terminal education for the general student was developing and challenging its less "practical" singular college preparatory function of the past. The ideal of education for all beyond literacy and toward good citizenship, general culture, and sound vocation was coming of age. And, in the field of education itself, as it attempted to become a scientific discipline, it became more highly specialized and the

proliferation of courses and research findings in the various scholarly approaches to the study of education demonstrated the great need for some broader conceptual framework within which to locate the masses of data being collected. Moreover, the promise of fact upon which to base prescription was not fully kept and it became clearer and clearer, given the masses of teachers who needed to be trained, that they required an opportunity to form a comprehensive belief system which would inspire them to direct their best efforts toward the terminal goals of general secondary education. Finally, and not the least important and perhaps the most precipitous, was the Great Depression itself which rent the social fabric and forced social conscience on everyone who was touched by it; but most especially by those in the field of education who took seriously George Counts' question of 1932, "Dare The School Build a Social Order?" and answered resoundingly, "Yes!"

A quarter century later, in 1957, my colleague the historian R. Freeman Butts replied to a query regarding the origins and development of the foundations idea at Teachers College Columbia University during this period with the following reflections:

The social crisis of the depression led to the belief that we needed courses that would deal with social issues and education. [But also] course offerings in most higher institutions had become highly specialized ... so foundation courses were designed to overcome the specialization represented by separate courses in history of education, philosophy of education, psychology of education, sociology of education, comparative education, and educational economics. This effort drew upon the survey or integrated course ideas that were being developed in Contemporary Civilization at Columbia and elsewhere. Some courses were actually taught by panels of instructors representing different fields.<sup>10</sup>

But it is not just the development of a very different format for teaching philosophy of education in the 1930's; it was also an important

indicator of a reconceptualization of the field of education itself. To the two dimensions of scientific research and philosophical description of ends was added the tasks of interpreter of scholarship and rebuilder of society. The role of the educator was not merely to be the university scholar and researcher, teacher of teachers, removed from the world. He was to be an active social agent infusing the teacher-to-be with the vision of the proper social world needed to overcome the ugly realities of the moment and reach the promised land of the future society of Man. In its strongest form, this meant social engineering and an initiation into the democratic tradition which some just might call "indoctrination" and did!

The story of this movement and the major philosophers who were involved in it, Kilpatrick, Rugg, Childs, et. al., is beautifully told in C.A. Bowers' book, The Progressive Educator in the Depression: The Radical Years. He argues that the early efforts during the depression at social reconstruction culminated in the writing of the book in 1943, The Improvement of Practical Intelligence, co-authored by four former presidents of the Philosophy of Education Society: Bruce Rapp its first president, George Axtelle, Kenneth Benne, and B.O. Smith.

Like the early reconstructionists these men started with the thesis that the growth of science and technology is the "chief dynamics" of social change. These forces had made society a highly interdependent, specialized, and delicately balanced system. The reconstructionists believed that such a society could not tolerate individuals who are not aware of the social implications of their actions. Continual contest between private and public interests threatened to slow the advance of technology and to ultimately lead to the disintegration of society. The only way to avert the social crisis that would result from the ability of individuals and groups to reach agreement on social issues was to find a method for solving problems in a truly democratic manner. The problem, as a reconstructionist saw it, was primarily

one of education. People would have to be taught new methods of thinking and new techniques of cooperation and more effective communication in groups. In short, people would have to learn the method of what the reconstructionists called "democratic deliberation" ... The new society was to be a "uncoerced community of persuasion."<sup>11</sup>

Once again, philosophers of education had offered the "final solution," the aim of a proper democratic education. They fearlessly asserted that through the schools a new social order could be built! Their dream has a tempting and timely ring to it today, but it remains largely an unrealized dream unfortunately.

Before moving to the last 25 years, we should recapitulate in capsule form some of the choices available to philosophers of education which will be reflective of the state of the art at mid century. The first half of this century provided license for philosophers of education to teach or preach Dewey, question or attack "the doctrine," or develop other philosophical views from which principles of education could be derived, or use philosophical systems to classify, interpret and understand varieties of professional practice, or talk hare-like about educational issues in a foundation course or reconstruct society or ... remember, there always will be a Plato, Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel to talk about ... etc. If this variegated fielder's choice was available to philosophers of education at mid century, then is it any wonder that the 1956 Harvard Educational Review symposium on the aims and content of philosophy of education should read like a patchwork quilt of these possibilities and many more. (Some even raising the question of whether philosophy of education was a legitimate field of scholarly inquiry.)

The Harvard Educational Review symposium contained the thoughts of 25 well known philosophers and philosophers of education and was a reply

of sorts to two earlier papers on the topics: "How Philosophical Can Philosophy of Education Be?" by Harry Broudy and "Is a Philosophy of Education Necessary?" by Kingsley Price. The symposium is quite fascinating on many counts not the least of which seems to be the emerging agreement on the part of some of the contributors following Broudy and Price in the belief that the analysis of distinctively educational ideas probably would be an important task for the philosopher of education to perform in the future (among other things, of course). Beyond that there seems to be little agreement about anything in the discussion of aims and content of philosophy of education except, perhaps, it should be done with real philosophical rigor and even that point is not made by most. An interesting missing element was any serious talk about the "isms" of philosophy of education and any battles of different schools being waged. From the perspective of twenty years later, it appears to this observer, at least, that this might be accounted for quite simply by the fact that philosophy of education had been pretty well dominated by the pragmatic-social reconstructionist camp for the proceeding twenty-five years and there was an emerging recognition in the 50's for the need to make philosophy of education legitimate by grounding it firmly in philosophy. The move to make philosophers first and educators second rather than the other way around was clearly underway. For many trained in this field since 1960, the effect of this subtle movement will be understood as it will also, I am sure by those who were trained prior to 1950.

In fact, in all the sub fields and specialities of education, the last dozen years or so have witnessed the move toward more "academic respectability" via the route of study and grounding in established scholarly disciplines. The curriculum reform that Sputnik brought and the

thrust for the acquisition of basic knowledge was not confined to secondary education alone. In graduate education generally, more and more refinements were made in academic specializations and sharper tools honed to do the scholarly job. Meanwhile, just as normal schools had turned into teachers colleges in the early part of this century, the 1960's found them in the process of metamorphosis into more "respectable" liberal arts state colleges in name if not in fact. No matter how one answered Walton and Kuethe's question of 1961, "Is education a discipline?"<sup>12</sup> it was clear to everyone at their conference that education was a firmly established university subject worthy of serious study and offering doctoral degrees in a vast array of specialization. Over the last dozen years at the graduate school I know best, Teachers College, Columbia University, I saw a major and sustained recruiting effort result in the attraction to the institution of a large number of first-rate scholars in the behavioral and social sciences and in other disciplined based fields. Their contribution to the substance, science and policy making of education has been quite impressive and it is just beginning.

There were changes in philosophy of education during this period also with which many of us are quite familiar. Five years ago I presented a paper<sup>13</sup> at the annual meeting of this Society sketching the development of linguistic and analytic work in philosophy of education through the 50's and 60's. Admittedly it was a very narrow view of what happened in our field during those years, dealing only with the growth of linguistic analysis, but as one of my respondents, Jim McClellan summed it up in his incredibly subdued style as he referred to his own role in the "movement":

... in retrospect, we were trying to draw a line and defend it: the line was marked: Beyond this point no more bullshit! Perhaps it wasn't the most daring or politically significant stand ever taken by a self-conscious group of philosophers of education, but it was ours and we were proud of it at the time.<sup>14</sup>

A broader and more inclusive view of the development of philosophy of education during the 1960's would have to recognize the attempt of most of our membership, regardless of their persuasion or age, to make philosophy of education more philosophical in the academic sense. In one important sense, the "position" or "school" or "tradition" that one came from or stood on didn't matter as much as the rigor with which one philosophized. Respect for philosophically sound argument reached beyond the base of alignment with existential, phenomenological, pragmatic, analytic or any other "philosophy" as long as it was philosophy and recognizable as such by people rigorously trained in the philosophical tradition. Another line was being drawn: no amateurs allowed!

I saw a whole cadre of worried professors of foundations of education at the American Educational Studies Association 1974 fall meeting recently held in New York. This contingent came to Teachers College to hear a number of professors from what had been the Department of Social and Philosophical Foundations of Education speak about "Foundations Then and Now." Essentially my colleagues reported that we had done away with foundations at Teachers College as evidenced by our new name, the "Division of Philosophy, the Social Sciences, and Education." And in the place of foundations we have individual philosophers, historians, anthropologists, economists, political scientists, and sociologists, whom we urge to do serious and scholarly studies in their corner of the field of education. In almost an inhumane and certainly insensitive way we were saying that in effect

Teachers College had done away with the field we had invented, disseminated across the country, and trained people in; and now we were reporting to those whom we had granted our benevolence either directly or indirectly that they were obsolete. Though I publicly chastized my colleagues, I'm afraid there was little I could do to help those who stood there in need of justification for amateurism in the pursuit of educational wisdom and the training of teachers.<sup>15</sup> The way of the future seems not to be the way of the generalist.

This leads us by a rather circuitous route to assay the current state of affairs in the field of education and in philosophy of education. I apologize for the sketchiness of my drawing of the past, but I wanted to be impressionistic and let you fill in and find your own place in the fluid intellectual development of the field you've chosen for your life's work. I know I've left out many things, not the least of which are some major problems and issues in the minds of many right now, i.e. the job market or lack of it and the threat of performance based teacher education. I've done this because I wanted to avoid the real but narrowing concerns of the present so that I could float before your consciousness three things at once: the dynamic growth of schooling and education on all levels and of all sorts in this century, the development of the field of education as a field of scholarly study, and the formalizing of a subject called philosophy of education. They need to be before you all at once if we're to have a sound sense of where we are at and where we might be. I turn now to the present and what I take to be an adequately representative perception of the sense and feelings of most of us.

Like the field of education itself in this last quarter century, we philosophers of education have been "regrouping." We have searched for a more responsible and respectable view of philosophy of education. We seem to be less willing than the majority of our predecessors in the first half of this century to try to chart the course of education by describing the universe and man's place in it. We also seem less willing to don the armour of the Knighthood of the Democratic Society and reconstruct the social order. As our views of what we should be about have changed, it hasn't helped in this last quarter century that the world and our colleagues from the other parts of the field of education still look to us to do these things.

In these last years we have sought responsibility and respectability by fuller immersion in and merger with general academic philosophy. But perhaps unlike the philosopher of history who writes no history or the philosopher of science who does no science we often feel separated and alienated from the down to earth business of education as if somehow we have let the practitioner down by doing scholarly philosophical work. We feel guilty because we are declared philosophers of education and we have a sense of responsibility to education to make a difference not just in philosophy, but in education as it is practiced. We want to have some effect on the field of education and these are noble and proper feelings.

But to be able to link our feelings to appropriate actions, we need to better know who we are, where we came from, and where we might go. We need a reasonable view of what constitutes respectable philosophical activity. We need a role analysis which untangles the mix of our major functions and gives some perspective to our choices, and finally, we need a way to think about the field of education which will help us locate

ourselves as co-workers in that field. To these ends, my final remarks are addressed.

If we have learned anything in this century, I hope it is that there is no simple answer to the question what is philosophy over and above the obvious that it is a rational, reflective, critical activity which can be done well or poorly and hopefully is carried on by open-minded and good willed people. No "school" has all the answers; no approach a direct path to the Truth; and no single feature identifies philosophy and separates it from all other modes of inquiry.

I think that Clive Beck boldly sums up what we all should know when he tells us that "philosophy's distinctiveness as an inquiry lies not in a few unique features which are common to all instances of philosophical activity, but in a unique configuration of typical interests, emphases, and approaches, displayed over a wide range of philosophical activities."<sup>16</sup> He identifies a number of these typical features of philosophizing and includes such things as: concern for "abstract questions" and "intellectual puzzles," for "generality and perspective," concern with "developing and employing strategies of cognition" and "analyzing what goes on in other disciplines," "clarifying meaning, developing concepts, establishing frames of reference, and in general providing the intellectual tools for the thought and observation involved in answering substantive questions," et. al.<sup>17</sup> His list could be added to, modified, and more fully developed, perhaps, but his point is well taken. It is with the shared family resemblances of the many things we do and pay attention to in our inquiries and arguments and it is our shared standards of logical rigor and reasonable argument that mark us as philosophers first and last no matter what phenomenon intrigues or engages us. Hopefully, we also have

learned that one of the surest roads to learning how to be a philosopher is to train with and apprentice oneself to first-rate philosophers either in person or through their works. The second-rate won't ever do; nor will amateurism, pseudo scholarship, or sloganeering.

Though we may perform many functions and play other roles, we know we are philosophers first and that the respect for our work directly depends on our integrity as scholars. But we are also teachers. Sometimes we seek to instruct the public, sometimes our colleagues, and sometimes our students. Should the Harvard Educational Review run another symposium today on the same topic as its 1956 consideration of aims and content of philosophy of education, I would expect a similar wide range of divergent views from the contributors. (I would expect the same also from an issue devoted to the consideration of the appropriate aims and content of teaching aesthetics. Maybe that tells us something!) We might, however, extrapolate from Beck's broad view of philosophical inquiry and argue that there are a number of typical purposes for which instruction in the philosophy of education might be given and in any particular segment of such instruction, any number of these might be operative. Among such typical aims might be: provision of general philosophical perspective or what Broudy calls "interpretive" knowledge, development of critical-logical-analytical skills, appreciation or construction of "cognitive maps" or conceptual frameworks for viewing and ordering the educational process, nurturing the development of a reflective disposition, creating an awareness of value questions and developing techniques for dealing with them, etc. I could go on as all of you well might, but it seems to me infrequent if not impossible to teach anyone philosophy of education without trying to achieve a number of such purposes. Furthermore, I submit that

this is a more accurate reflection of what we are about in our teaching as philosophers of education than would be any simple aim-goal-purpose statement that anyone has yet written or will write. And, except when the learning of specific content is our goal, the variety of content we might choose to achieve our multiple purposes is copious and as different as differing modes of transportation which can be used to carry one to the same destination. We could hope for the development of a better map of the options, but even if we get one, we should never abdicate our responsibility for choosing destinations and the vehicles as well as the routes to travel. This is not to preach eclecticism, but to accept legitimate complexity and pluralism and to put the burden of making good philosophical and pedagogical sense where it belongs, on the individual who would teach philosophy of education to students, colleagues, special publics, or to the world at large.

I have touched on our functions as scholars and teachers, but clearly, we also play the rôle of "educationist," co-worker in the field of educational research and professional training. We need a sense of what we might do in such a capacity and we also need a more adequate conception of the field in its current state of development. Many models, metaphors and analogies have proved useful in the past in highlighting important features of education both as a social process and as a field of study. Yet we know full well that all analogies break down at some point and that on occasion such comparisons can do more harm than good. Nonetheless, I would like to use the analogy of architecture to sketch some aspects of a view of education which I believe reflects our growing awareness of its complexity and hence suggests the fecundity of a field in need of a

variety of philosophical inquiries.

Architecture lends itself most readily to the suggestive drawing out of a description of a complex field which is neither simple art nor becoming precise science, is both like and unlike engineering and medicine, and is beyond the simple-minded view of applied fields being essentially the direct use of previously acquired knowledge and skill in practical situations. The aesthetic dimension of architecture goes beyond the singularly means-ends, instrumental application of knowledge and skill required in such fields as engineering and medicine. It makes room in a very important way for style and concern with form as well as function. It makes room for the critic and for the cultivation of good taste. It puts a premium on imagination and creativeness and use of what is known and available in the design of what might be both useful and beautiful. The architect does not seek one perfect form to serve all functions and all clients. He seeks the best fit of environment, material, client needs and desires and then creates an appropriate form. The client literally lives in the space designed and constructed for him by the architect much as the educated person "lives" in the mind-space provided by his culture and schooling.

As a social institution, as a human process, as a field of study and professional training, education is a highly complex affair not simply rendered "clarified" by distinguishing between these three senses of the use of the term. There is a curious and complex mixture here, convoluted and interwoven much like the elements of architecture are, I suspect, and much in need of reconceptualization and clarification beyond any simple three-fold distinction. Is there a dimension in education like the aesthetic

dimension of architecture which forces fundamental considerations beyond the instrumental? Perhaps it is the cultural-humanistic or the social-ethical or, as the Neo-Marxist would have it, the political. Is the underlying concept of "design" fundamental to both fields? Herbert Simon seems to think so when he says "everyone designs who devises courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones... design, so construed is the core of all professional training; it is the principle mark that distinguishes the professions from the sciences.

Schools of engineering as well as schools of architecture, business, education, law, and medicine are all essentially concerned with the process of design.<sup>18</sup> Are the "mind-spaces" we help people construct more like Phil Phenix's Realms of Meaning, "ways of knowing" developed by mankind to acquire objective knowledge about his world or are they more like Maxine Greene's existential and subjective multiple realities and multiple universes of meaning?

There are a host of such philosophical questions imbedded in the complex view of education suggested by the analogy with architecture and by the real complexity of a field which grew like topsy in this century. It is not so much that older philosophical questions have been answered by grand educational architects or that their able critics have won the day as much as it seems to be that more interesting philosophical puzzles have emerged in the parallel developments of mass education and serious university scholarship and research directed at all aspects of educative phenomena.

Fortunately, as the field of education has become more complex we have become more sophisticated. We have a better nose for philosophical

issues and problems as well as having better training and better tools to deal with them. For example, the Commission to Analyze Education established by vote of this Society two years ago will be reporting at this meeting on the philosophical dimension of such diverse contemporary topics as: accountability, individualization of instruction, deschooling, career education, reverse discrimination, alternate schools, systems approaches to education, a taxonomy for education innovations, performance based teacher education, and humanistic education. And, just a few years ago you will recall, the 1972 NSSÈ Yearbook (Part I) was devoted to a large scale attack on the problems of The Philosophical Redirection of Educational Research. Here at this meeting a glance at your programs will show the diversity of topics to be given serious philosophical treatment by our membership over the next few days. In a word, we have become ... quite properly ... autonomous gadflies; forcing philosophical thought and critical reflection wherever it may be needed in the complex arena of educational theory, practice, policy and research at this the three quarters mark of the 20th century.

Thus, it is nice to end at the beginning. My purpose in all this you will recall was to turn your head both backward and forward ... getting a sense of the past by leafing through old photo albums, filling in much of the immediate past with your own experience, and finally looking at the present realistically ... recognizing its complexity and its demands as we face the task of building a future different from the past. If my perception of the present is accurate, we begin this last quarter as professional gadflies. The role is an old and noble one which takes skill and ability as well as intellectual honesty and a willingness to accept

ones ignorance as a starting point. Where or what we shall be at the end of this century is impossible to forecast, but at least I'm sure there will have been a good many real and useful philosophical questions asked along the way [by the likes of us] to make the journey through educational fields both interesting and worthwhile!

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> N. Edwards and H. Richey, The School in the American Social Order (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1963), pp. 606-607.

<sup>2</sup> Charles H. Judd, Introduction to the Scientific Study of Education (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1918), pp. 305-306.

<sup>3</sup> Charles J. Brauner, American Educational Theory (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Incorporated, 1964), p. 146.

<sup>4</sup> It is interesting to note here that the PES was organized in 1941, a relative latecomer on the "field of education" scene which begs for historical explanation and interpretation.

<sup>5</sup> National Institute for Education Conference on Studies in Teaching, June 16-20, 1974, Washington, D.C. (Published Reports forthcoming).

<sup>6</sup> Brauner, p. 172.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 177.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 180.

<sup>9</sup> Boyd Bode, Progressive Education at the Crossroads (New York: Newsome and Company, 1938), pp. 85-86. In the same year, Dewey published his Kappa Delta Pi lectures on Experience and Education arguing that progressive education didn't give answers; rather it set the questions and problems in need of answers.

<sup>10</sup> Brauner, p. 202.

<sup>11</sup> C.A. Bowers, The Progressive Educator and the Depression: The Radical Years (New York: Random House, 1969), p. 206.

<sup>12</sup> James Walton and James Kuethe, The Discipline of Education (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963).

<sup>13</sup> Jonas F. Soltis, "Analysis and Anomalies in Philosophy of Education," Philosophy of Education 1971: Proceedings of the 27th Annual Meeting of the Philosophy of Education Society, ed. Robert D. Heslep (Edwardsville, Illinois: Philosophy of Education Society, 1972).

<sup>14</sup> James E. McClellan, "In Reply to Professor Soltis," Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>15</sup> However my last three papers were an attempt to justify the usefulness of philosophical and other disciplinary and general professional knowledge in the daily activities of teaching in what Harry Broudy calls the interpretive use of knowledge. See my papers on "The Passion to Teach," Theory into Practice XII (February 1973): 5 - 12, "Locating Teacher Competency: An Action Description of Teaching" with Donnas Kerr, Educational Theory 24 (Winter 1974): 3 - 16, and "Knowledge and Professional Practice in Education" a paper delivered at the University of Illinois at Urbana Conference on "The Uses of Knowledge in Personal Life and Professional Practice" September 1974.

<sup>16</sup> Clive Beck, Educational Philosophy and Theory: An Introduction (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974), p. 285.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 16, 285-289, et. passim.

<sup>18</sup> Herbert A. Simon, The Sciences of the Artificial (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1969), pp. 55-56.